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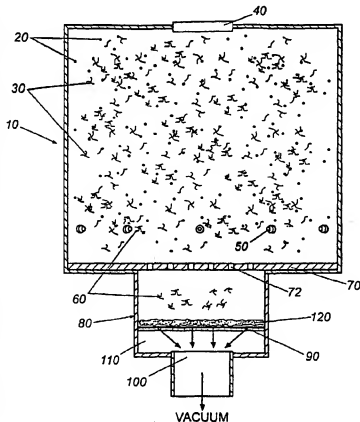
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: HIGH SUPERABSORBENT CONTENT WEBS AND A METHOD FOR MAKING THEM



(57) Abstract: The present invention is directed to webs comprising fibers and superabsorbent materials in which the webs exhibit low susceptibility to migration of superabsorbent material within the web, even where the webs contain very high concentrations of superabsorbent materials. The invention is further directed to absorbent articles comprising such webs. The invention is further directed to methods for manufacturing such webs.

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Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR,
GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent
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(AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU,
MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI,
CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG)

— as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the
earlier application (Rule 4.17(ii)) for all designations

Declarations under Rule 4.17:

— as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted
a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for the following designations AE,
AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA,
CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES,
FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG,
MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU,
SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG,
UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS,
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

 Interna Application No
 PCT/US 02/04655

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 D04H1/72 D04H1/70 A61L15/60

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 D04H A61L A61F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 0 528 248 A (KIMBERLY CLARK CO) 24 February 1993 (1993-02-24) the whole document ---	1-14
A	US 4 927 346 A (SCHNEIDER DOUGLAS A ET AL) 22 May 1990 (1990-05-22) the whole document ---	1
A	US 5 489 469 A (KOBAYASHI TAKATOSHI ET AL) 6 February 1996 (1996-02-06) cited in the application the whole document ---	1-14
A	US 3 901 236 A (KING PAUL A ET AL) 26 August 1975 (1975-08-26) cited in the application the whole document ---	1-14
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☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

E earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

L document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

T later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

X document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

Y document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

Z document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

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09/10/2002

 Name and mailing address of the ISA
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5 230 959 A (NEOGI AMAR N ET AL) 27 July 1993 (1993-07-27) the whole document ---	1
A	US 4 128 692 A (REID ALBERT R) 5 December 1978 (1978-12-05) the whole document ---	1
A	WO 00 62922 A (KIMBERLY CLARK CO) 26 October 2000 (2000-10-26) page 9, line 23 -page 10, line 30; examples ---	1-14
A	US 5 520 673 A (YARBROUGH SANDRA M ET AL) 28 May 1996 (1996-05-28) column 11, line 66 -column 15, line 52 column 23, line 39 -column 25, line 14 ---	1-14
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A	EP 0 439 012 A (KIMBERLY CLARK CO) 31 July 1991 (1991-07-31) figure 1 -----	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US 02/04655**Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)**

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☒ Claims Nos.: 15
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

Continuation of Box I.2

Claims Nos.: 15

Present claim 15 relates to a method defined by reference to a desirable characteristic or property, namely:

increasing the concentration of superabsorbent material in the web without loss when subjected to the Shakeout Test.

The claim cover all methods having this characteristic or property, whereas the application provides support within the meaning of Article 6 PCT and/or disclosure within the meaning of Article 5 PCT for only a very limited number of such methods. In the present case, the claims so lack support, and the application so lacks disclosure, that a meaningful search over the whole of the claimed scope is impossible. Independent of the above reasoning, the claim also lack clarity (Article 6 PCT). An attempt is made to define the method by reference to a result to be achieved. Again, this lack of clarity in the present case is such as to render a meaningful search over the whole of the claimed scope impossible.

Consequently, the search has been carried out for those parts of the claims (1-14) which appear to be clear, supported and disclosed in the application.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims, or parts of claims, relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure.

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